Abstract
Introduction- This study deals with the perceptions of male Eritrean asylum seekers regarding gender roles, marriage and sexuality. Only a handful of studies focusing on asylum seekers were conducted in Israel, and none addressed men, who are the majority of this population. In the Israeli social discourse, these men are presented as a threat, or, alternatively, as people with no purpose other than work. Therefore, this study wishes to present them differently by focusing on universal issues that reveal their humanity. The literature review begins with a summary of the implications of geographic and cultural change that asylum seekers experience by coming to Israel. Next, the process of acculturation in different aspects of the immigrant's life is presented, highlighting gender roles, marriage and sexuality. Finally, I address the cross-cultural nature of the research and its implications.

Research methods- This study uses a qualitative-naturalistic approach. At first, preliminary conversations with three key informants were held, followed by twelve semi-structured in-depth interviews with Eritrean men, four of which were conducted with the help of a cultural interpreter. The interviews were analyzed using content analysis.

Findings- The perceptions of the interviewees were constructed in the context of their lives in Israel, which includes three aspects: a cultural gap; living without any formal status; and the large numerical discrepancy between men and women. They described their lives as a "turning point" that included changes in perceptions and behavior, and highlighted the loss of their traditional roles versus a rise in the women status. In the field of sexuality, they described the change as a shift from "closeness" to "openness". Single men described loneliness and difficulty in self fulfillment. Each one of the interviewees tried to redefine their identity using different strategies ranging from acceptance to denial of the changes.

Discussion- The current findings are discussed in light of those of previous researches, most of which revealed similar perceptions. Two innovative issues are then discussed: First, the impact that being status-less has on issues such as marriage and sexuality that are perceived as "private". Second, the presentation of the interviewees as subjects with a legitimate sexual world. Finally, the interviewees’
perceptions are discussed with regard to their masculine identity. Gender roles, marriage and sexuality are spheres through which masculinity is constructed, and also ones which are influenced by it.